

NACMS NEWSLETTER  
December 2024

Happy Feast of St. Nicholas! As we prepare for the Christmas season, we have resources for your personal holiday journey. Keep reading to learn more about:

- "Mary's Trust," an Advent reflection by Fr. Renny Markose, SM,
- Podcast Series Highlight: *Advent Marian Meditations*,
- Marianist Christmas Gift Ideas,
- Recent Publications,
- Congratulations to Dr. Cipolla-McCulloch, and
- Our Holiday Closures.



### "Mary's Trust" by Fr. Renny Markose, SM

Growing up in a hot and humid part of the world, where power outages were very common, I spent many hours as a child outdoors on starry nights to escape from the heat indoors. With it came my hobby of counting the number of stars. Needless to say, I never succeeded beyond a few hundred stars. Later in my school years, I learned that there are not just stars but also constellations of stars, and then there are galaxies, and there are billions and trillions of such galaxies.



Once, my science teacher made a staggering claim that if we could count all the galaxies in the universe, they would be more than the sands of the earth in number! And then came the stunning revelation from my catechism teacher just before Christmas that a tiny child named Jesus, lying in a manger, is the Creator of this unimaginably gigantic and massive universe! What shocked me the most was her statement: "He came down to save the little, minute, micro creatures called the human

beings!" Who would believe this? No one but a little girl named Mary of Nazareth!

Though Mary never comprehended the size of the universe, she certainly understood the magnitude of God's love for humankind! That's why, though uncertain of her future, she said her famous "yes" to the Creator. In complete trust, she then surrendered herself completely to be guided by God's Spirit and God's ways. Perhaps her "science of faith" is what we need as we walk this Advent—the knowledge that no one else but God, the Creator of the Universe, is the best guide for one's life. The best thing I can do is to allow God to take control of my life. Let the loving will of God be done!



Fr. Renny Markose, SM (Region of India), is one of the three **Marianist Specialists-in-Training** this year at NACMS.

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## Podcast Highlight: *Advent Marian Meditations*



NACMS has produced a special podcast series called *Advent Marian Meditations*, a resource to guide you through the Advent season. Created in 2017 by Gabby Bibeau and Bro. Tom Redmond, SM, *Advent Marian Meditations* invites listeners to incorporate weekly prayer and reflection during the busy holiday season. Each of the four 10-minute

episodes includes scripture, reflections, prayer, and music to highlight the Annunciation, the Immaculate Conception, the Visitation, and the Nativity. Find these meditations wherever you listen to podcasts, including [our website](#) and [YouTube Channel](#) under *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*. We hope these reflections will guide you on your journey into the mystery of Jesus' birth and your relationship with him.

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## Marianist Christmas Gift Ideas

Are you looking for Marianist stocking stuffers this Christmas season? NACMS has you covered! [Our bookstore](#) contains more than 100 titles related to Marianist spirituality, history, and charism tailored to everyone, from the newly acquainted to lifelong Marianists. Two special items of interest include *The Marianist Family Prayer Book*, an essential resource for those inspired

by the Marianist approach to spirituality, and Marianist Father Quentin Hakenewerth's *Growing in the Virtues of Jesus*, which takes readers on a journey of inner peace and union with Jesus. Both books are excellent resources for individuals and communities to utilize.



## Recent Publications



Over 75 years ago, in October 1949, three Marianist Sisters arrived in Somerset, Texas, to establish the first foundation of the Daughters of Mary Immaculate (Marianist Sisters) in the United States. Roughly 21 years after that foundation, Sr. Gretchen Trautman, FMI, professed first vows with the Daughters of Mary Immaculate. In our latest episode of *Sharing Our Marianist Stories*, Sr. Gretchen describes her first encounters with the Marianist Family and Charism, the influence of God's voice in her vocational journey, and how her leadership experiences influenced her vision for sharing the Marianist Charism.

An abbreviated audio-only version of this podcast is available wherever you listen to podcasts, **including our website**. An extended video version, which incorporates photos of Sr. Gretchen's journey into the video from her interview, is available on our **YouTube Channel**.

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## Congratulations Dr. Cipolla–McCulloch

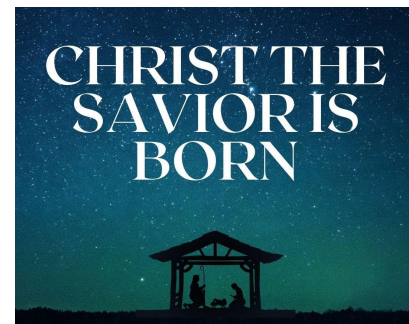


Join us in offering a resounding “congratulations” to Caitlin Cipolla–McCulloch, PhD, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation earlier this week. Her doctoral research examined the Marianist Family in different cultures and time periods to nuance a new way of considering Mary as “nurturer.” Doctor Cipolla–McCulloch hopes that considering Mary as “nurturer” might assist the Marianist Family in sharing its gifts with the Church and the world.

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## NACMS Holiday Closures

The NACMS office will be closed beginning Monday, December 9 due to planned maintenance. We will reopen on Monday, December 16. Additionally, we will be closed for the Christmas holiday beginning Monday, December 23, and will reopen on Thursday, January 2, 2025. We wish you and your loved ones a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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